

## Draft Remarks

Ambassador Stephen Mull at the Opening of a U.S. Aviation Detachment  
Łask Air Base, Poland  
November 9, 2012

- Minister Siemoniak, Admiral Stavridis, General Cieniuch, ladies and gentlemen, and, of course, Major Spears and his team.
- I feel very fortunate to be back in Poland, and especially here in Łask on my first full day as the Ambassador of the United States.
- As I told President Komorowski, when I presented to him my credentials yesterday afternoon, I look forward to strengthening our remarkably close friendship and alliance, including in the area of security cooperation.
- Over the past two decades, we have forged a partnership for lasting peace and security. Just yesterday, senior U.S. and Polish leaders met in Warsaw to discuss how to continue to grow this partnership in order to meet the challenges and seize the opportunities that the 21<sup>st</sup> century offers.
- Here in Łask the United States and Poland are making history together with the first full-time stationing of U.S. troops on Polish soil. This aviation detachment has the potential to become more than just a concrete symbol of the United States' dedication to Poland and Europe's security; with time and effort it could become a great resource for not only Poland's neighbors, but for the whole of NATO.
- Looking at the aircraft on the tarmac – including Polish F-16s, which are the most modern in Europe – and looking across the audience gathered here for this historic event, I am struck by the fact that 25 years ago, this gathering would have been unimaginable.
- Today's event, of course, it is the new normal. Today, Poland is a key NATO and bilateral ally for the United States. Polish and American soldiers learn, train, and fight together: one can see us standing shoulder to shoulder in U.S. service academies and military education programs, on the training

ground at Kielce, and in recent years, on the battlefields of Iraq and Afghanistan.

- U.S. Patriot batteries will shortly complete their 9<sup>th</sup> rotation here in Poland. U.S. land forces routinely join their Polish colleagues in Polish exercises ANAKONDA and DRAGON, and will do so again in the coming years. U.S., Polish and other NATO airmen patrol over the Baltic and fly together in the most challenging and realistic combat simulations on the planet – the RED FLAG series of exercises.
- The U.S. security commitment to Poland is rock-solid, enshrined in NATO's Article V and demonstrated through our close security cooperation on daily basis. With Europe remaining the cornerstone of U.S. national security, Poland is a critical partner for the United States, as shown, not only by this facility here in Łask, but also by our commitment to open a missile defense base in Redzikowo in just a few years to defend Poland, Europe, and the United States.
- I'm looking forward to welcoming the first U.S. aircraft to Poland for joint training exercises in the coming year.
- Thanks again to our Polish partners for their dedication and hospitality. Życzę powodzenia!